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SERVICE NEWS

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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Benton, Miss Mildred

August 22, 1939

SOIL CONSERVATION FIELD DAY AT HOPE, ARKANSAS

H. H. Bennett addressed more than 5,000 persons on soil conservation near Hope, Ark., on July 25. The Chief appeared on the program arranged for the annual Soil Conservation Field Day, sponsored by the supervisors of the Terre Rouge-Bedcaw soil conservation district, and the Mine Creek soil conservation district.

The field day ceremonies were held at Alton CCC camp, seven miles south of Hope. Dr. Bennett was accompanied by Louis P. Merrill and J. W. Sargent, regional conservator and assistant regional conservator for Region 4; and Glenn E. Riddell, Arkansas state coordinator. W. S. Atkins, mayor of Hope, was master of ceremonies.

Dr. Bennett outlined the extent of soil erosion and of conservation work in Arkansas and in the United States. Declaring soil erosion to be one of the Nation's most serious problems, he stated that unless the soil is conserved and land use adjustments are made, "national decadence lies ahead."

Other speakers on the program were Louis P. Merrill; W. S. Atkins; Waldo Frazier and R. E. Short of the Arkansas Farm Bureau; George W. Ware of the University of Arkansas branch experiment station at Hope; Glenn F. Wallace, chairman of the board of supervisors of the Mine Creek soil conservation district; and Riley Lewallen, chairman of the board of supervisors of the Terre Rouge-Bodcaw soil conservation district.

Business establishments in Hope were closed from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and a free barbeque was provided. Farmers were given the opportunity to observe successful soil and water conservation measures on farms within the work areas of the local soil conservation project and CCC camp.

NEWSPAPER ITEM

The editor of the Hope Star, daily newspaper published at Hope, Ark., is a strong supporter of soil conservation work. From July 10 to 26, inclusive, each issue of the Star carried a story on soil conservation. With two exceptions, all these stories appeared on page one.

The Soil Conservation Field Day at Hope on July 25, when H. H. Bennett addressed 5,000 persons on soil conservation, was the occasion for this example of enterprising journalism.

CONSERVATION BROADCAST AUGUST 30

Soil conservation in the Burley tobacco section of Kentucky will be featured on the National Farm and Home Program on August 30.

Speaking from Chicago, William Garrard Talbot, a cooperating farmer of Paris, Ky., will discuss the erosion control program on his farm. David A. Shipp, superintendent of the CCC camp at Danville, Ky., and Ewing Jones of the regional office at Dayton, Ohio, will also take part in the broadcast.

PLANT WORKER COMPILATION

The August issue of the Journal of Forestry reports that a new international Address Book of Plant Taxonomists, Geographers, and Ecologists is being prepared by the Editors of *Chronica Botanica* to be issued in the near future in the "New Series of Plant Science Books." The Address Book will not only give the names and addresses of the scientists included, but also their scientific interests.

The Address Book will list research workers and projects in taxonomy, ecology, geography, palaeo-botany and scientists engaged in the geographic or ecological aspects of agronomy, forestry, horticulture, and pharmacognosy. Questionnaire application blanks may be had free of charge by writing the Editor, *Chronica Botanica*, P. O. Box 8, Leiden, Holland.

GULLY CONTROL FILM STRIP

Film strip series 504, 75 frames, entitled "Gully Prevention and Control", has recently been released. It was prepared in Washington,

D. C., by H. G. Jepson, consulting engineer, from photographs taken all over the country by the Soil Conservation Service staff. The film strip illustrates methods in use for prevention and control of gullies.

HIGHWAY EROSION CONTROL ON BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY

The Soil Conservation Service is collaborating with the U. S. Park Service in checking erosion along certain sections of National Park highways. As part of this cooperative program, a meeting was recently held at Roanoke, Va., to discuss the problems of erosion control along approximately 500 miles of the Blue Ridge Parkway in Virginia and North Carolina.

The group consisted of Arnold Davis and Harry C. Diener of the Washington office; Thomas Webb of the Spartanburg office; Lyman Carrier and E. B. Garrett, state coordinators in Virginia and North Carolina, respectively; and Daniel W. Levandowsky, H. E. Van Gelder, and Malcolm A. Bird, representing the Park Service.

The preservation of the natural scenic beauty of farm and forest land, as well as erosion control measures, was discussed. A rapid reconnaissance trip was taken over approximately 70 miles of the Blue Ridge Parkway to ascertain what could be accomplished by joint action.

THE CHIEF'S BROADCAST

On the morning of August 15, Chief H. H. Bennett's office was besieged by telephone calls from friends congratulating him on his broadcast of the previous evening, when he discussed soil conservation on the National Radio Forum. This program, sponsored by the Evening Star of Washington, D. C., and the National Broadcasting Company, features discussions of current topics of interest. The oldest program of its kind, it has been presented for the past 12 years and is now on a coast-to-coast network.

Soil conservation is one of the most urgent problems confronting the United States today, declared Dr. Bennett. Pointing out that the soil resources of the Nation are being drained by erosion, he stated that "no civilization anywhere on earth has ever survived the downfall of its agricultural land." The Chief added, however, that "we have too much patriotism, too much business sense, to permit the continuation of an evil that already has brought severe hardships to thousands of hard-working Americans."

A limited supply of Dr. Bennett's address is available through the division of information.

TENTATIVE PLANS SUBMITTED FOR CONSERVATION
AND FIRE CONTROL IN EVERGLADES REGION, FLORIDA

The Service committee appointed to formulate policies and work plans for soil and water conservation and fire hazard elimination in the Everglades region of Florida held a series of meetings at Clewiston, Fla., July 31-August 3.

Aspects of the Everglades' problem were presented by representatives of the Army Engineers, U. S. Sugar Corporation, Everglades Fire Control Committee, Chamber of Commerce, Lake Worth Drainage District Engineers, Florida State Planning Board, the Okeechobee Flood Control Board, and the Fire Warden of the Everglades district.

After the hearings, recommendations were prepared by the committee for the conduct of work, which was authorized by the last session of Congress. The recommendations are now being studied in the Washington office.

FOREIGN VISITORS TO WASHINGTON OFFICE

Distinguished foreign scientists who have visited the biology division during the past week are David Lack of London, a student of bird behavior, and Ellis Troughton, C.M.Z.S., Curator of Mammals at the Australian Museum and past president of the Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales.

Mr. Lack has been in this country for several months studying habits and habitat of American birds.

Mr. Troughton has been designated to make recommendations for establishing a biological service in Australia.

TRANSFER OF GARRETT COUNTY L.U. PROJECT
TO STATE OF MARYLAND

Between 1500 and 2000 persons attended the dedication ceremonies when the Garrett County Purchase and Development Project was transferred to the State of Maryland on August 9.

Delivering the dedication address, Dr. Bennett outlined the principles behind the government's submarginal land purchase program. In a resume of the agricultural history of the area, he contrasted the "lush valleys where the streams ran clear" described by the pioneers, with the present-day "pale fields of anaemic subsoil, the cutover wastes, gullies and slopes," which tell the story of unwise land use.

Purchased in 1935, the Garrett County project has been developed as a forestry, wildlife, and recreation area by the government. A tract of 1800 acres was transferred to the University of Maryland to serve as an outdoor laboratory for research and experimentation. The balance, 33,825 acres, was transferred to the Forestry Department of the State of Maryland.

Harry C. Byrd, president of the University of Maryland, spoke highly of the work of the Service. He endorsed the philosophy behind the land purchase and praised the way in which this particular project was developed. The State Forester and other state officials were also enthusiastic.

DR. BENNETT SPEAKS AT LAKE GEORGE, N. Y.

At the request of J. S. Apperson, director of the New York State Forestry Association, H. H. Bennett addressed a meeting of New York State officials and others interested in conservation of soil, forests; and wildlife on August 19, at Lake George, N. Y. George A. Barnes, chief of the division of information, also attended the meeting.

MORE "EXPLORERS" IN THE SERVICE

The item in the July 29 issue of SERVICE NEWS concerning explorers has uncovered the fact that the list is by no means a complete rostrum of SCS explorers. Other recently elected members of the Explorers Club are H. H. Bennett, chief of the Service; C. B. Manifold, assistant chief of the Service; and W. F. Peel of the technical operations staff.

NEW 'FARMERS' BULLETIN

Farmers who want to get surplus rainfall off their fields in a safe and orderly manner will find a host of practical suggestions in U.S.D.A. Farmers' Bulletin No. 1814, "Terrace Outlets and Farm Drainageways."

Prepared by C. L. Hamilton of the Division of Engineering, the bulletin treats the problem of farm water disposal from an erosion control standpoint. Pasture and meadow strips, grass-covered channels, and other soil-saving measures that may be used to take care of run-off from cultivated fields or terrace ends are described and illustrated.

Where excess water can be discharged directly onto a well established pasture, meadow or woods, such a plan should be given first preference, according to the bulletin. In other cases, the problem may be solved simply by leaving natural field depressions in permanent grass or hay.

On farms where neither of these plans is practical, the bulletin recommends the construction of protected outlet channels. In non-technical terms, it gives specifications for building outlet channels and directions for providing them with an erosion-resisting cover of vegetation.

The use of mechanical protective measures, such as check dams and concrete flumes, is recommended only on areas where vegetation is difficult to establish or on high-value lands where complete protection is needed.

SCS LIBRARY EXPANDS

The Service Library quarters in the Columbian Building have recently been expanded and rearranged so that more space is available for reading tables for those searching literature and indexes on various subjects.

HIGHWAY EROSION CONTROL FILM

Reed N. Haythorne of the division of information is on a trip through Regions 2, 4, and 6 to film highway erosion control in those regions.

The itinerary was worked out and basic material assembled in collaboration with Arnold Davis of the engineering division. Mr. Haythorne plans to film highway erosion and its control in the New England states in the near future.

E. A. JOHNSON TRANSFERRED TO WASHINGTON

E. A. Johnson, formerly assistant chief of TC-BIA with headquarters at Denver, Colo., has been transferred to the Washington office. He becomes assistant chief of the range conservation division and will continue to give considerable attention to cooperative work on Indian Reservations and other public lands.

CONSERVATION IN PUERTO RICO

C. B. Manifold, assistant chief of the Service, recently spent ten days in Puerto Rico when the administration of work on the island was officially transferred from the Washington office to Region 2.

Mr. Manifold, accompanied by T. S. Buie, regional conservator, and George L. Crawford, in charge of conservation work in Puerto Rico, visited six work areas and two experimental areas. These erosion control projects are on land purchased by the Puerto Rico Reconstruction Administration for colonization purposes. The land will be turned over by the P.R.R.A. only to colonists who agree to carry out prescribed erosion control measures.

Considerable interest in flood control is developing over the island, Mr. Manifold reported. Plans are under way to install conservation measures on a watershed of more than 5,000 acres, with the SCS furnishing technical supervision and, in cooperation with the Extension Service, training Puerto Ricans in the establishment of correct land use practices and control measures within the watershed.

PRINTER'S INK

"A Modified Logarithmic Probability Graph for the Interpretation of Mechanical Analyses of Sediments" is the title of an article by George H. Otto of the Cooperative Laboratory, Pasadena Institute of Technology, published in the Journal of Sedimentary Petrology for August 1939.

An article entitled "Discharge of V-Notch Weirs at Low Heads" by Fred W. Blaisdell, of the Washington hydraulic laboratory staff, at the National Bureau of Standards, appears in the August 1939 issue of Civil Engineering.

In this article Mr. Blaisdell presents data which show that V-notch weirs are not dependable discharge measuring instruments at low heads. He defines a "low" head as any head less than 0.3 foot.

As a result of his tests he recommends that all weirs to be used at low heads be carefully calibrated and then be used under conditions which are identical with those during calibration, if even approximate values of the discharge are desired.

The second of a series of three articles by W. C. Lowdermilk, chief of research, appears in the August issue of American Forests. It is entitled "Footprints of Roman Agriculture."

The "footprints" referred to are remains of Roman cities, aqueducts, cisterns, wells, terraces, check dams, etc., some of which are still intact and useful, others buried or in process of excavation. Innumerable olive presses in areas now devoid of trees tell their own story.

"The phenomena of shifting soils is thus far the most significant finding of our observations," writes Dr. Lowdermilk. "Soils of entire mountain and hill slopes have shifted from the rock foundations to expose the naked rock skeletons of the hills."

Remains of check dams and terracing reveal an extensive knowledge and practice in the control and use of little waters and the conservation of soils. In conclusion Dr. Lowdermilk points out that through misuse of the land "all these measures and works can be destroyed by man until productive lands are transformed into man-made deserts."

An article entitled "Methods of Measuring Soil Erosion" by Helmut Kohnke and F. R. Dreibelbis, both of Coshocton, Ohio, appears in Soil Research--Bodenkundliche Forschungen (Berlin) Vol. VI, No. 4/5, 1939.

Four methods of measuring erosion are enumerated: Conservation survey method, sediment survey method, run-off measurement of available plant nutrients carried away, and run-off measurement of all soil carried away. The relative merits of the four methods are discussed.

REPORT ON CALIFORNIA FLOOD OF MARCH 1938

Carl B. Brown of the division of sedimentation spent six weeks in southern California in March 1938 studying the flood which raged there at that time. His findings, together with subsequent analyses, are soon to be published as a Technical Bulletin of the U.S.D.A. The tentative title is "The Effect of the Flood of March 1938 in Southern California."

NOTES

Edwin E. Ferguson, attorney in the land policy division of the office of the Solicitor, recently returned from a trip to Berkeley, Calif., where he assisted the California State Soil Conservation Committee in preparing a procedure for organizing soil conservation districts under the California law, as amended in the 1939 session of the legislature. The State committee had requested the services of an attorney from the Department to assist it in this work. While in Berkeley, Mr. Ferguson also reviewed with the state and regional offices various organizational and operational phases of the districts program.

Helen M. Strong of the division of information attended the curriculum workshop conducted by Columbia University, August 8-11, and the meetings of the National Science Committee last week at Bronxville, N. Y. She is a consultant of the Committee.

At a recent meeting of the National Education Association at San Francisco, Calif., Dr. Strong was elected secretary of the department of science instruction of the Association.

Charles R. Enlow, chief of the division of agronomy, spent the past month in Regions 4, 5, and 6, visiting projects and conferring with the regional staffs on agronomy work. He expects to return to Washington, D. C., on August 25.

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